

Finding of No Significant Impact
Northwest Ada County Rights-of-Way Corridors
Environmental Assessment DOI-BLM-ID-B010-2010-0010-EA

I have reviewed the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (CEQ) for significance (40 CFR 1508.27) and have determined the actions analyzed in DOI-BLM-ID-B010-2010-0010-EA would not constitute a major federal action that would significantly affect the quality of the human environment; therefore an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. This finding was made by considering both the context and intensity of the potential effects, as described in the above EA, using the following factors defining significance:

1) Impacts that may be both beneficial and adverse.

The EA analyzed beneficial and adverse impacts of the proposed action (Alternatives 2, 3 and 4). Approval of the proposal to construct roads and improve the function of a drainage channel in support of future economic development would result in short term adverse impacts to air quality, water quality, soils, vegetation, wildlife, livestock grazing and recreation. A long term impact would occur to visual resources but the area is currently managed under VRM Category III which allows for development. A loss of 8-12 total AUMs would be expected due to fragmentation of the affected allotments. When completed the roads and drainage channel would be landscaped with a mix of native grasses, shrubs, trees that would provide habitat for a variety of insects, birds and/or small mammals/reptiles. Short term and long term economic benefits would be expected based on increased labor needs for construction and maintenance of the roads, future housing development and associated utilities. (Section 3, pp 1-64)

2) The degree to which the proposed action affects public health or safety.

The proposed action would not have any appreciable adverse effect on public health or safety. The roads would connect the future M3 development area with the existing city of Eagle which will provide for improved emergency service response and access for non-motorized recreation. The improved drainage channel would provide a venue for pedestrian exercise which may have some minor positive effect on public health.

3) Unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity to historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas.

The proposed action would affect approximately 300 feet of the Basye Freight Road. However, due to other existing infrastructure which has affected the integrity of the Basye Freight Road it was determined to be not eligible for listing by the NRHP (Section 3.11.2.2, pp 64)

- 4) *The degree to which the effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be highly controversial.*

Roads and recreational trail systems have been constructed and maintained in the region for decades. Environmental effects associated with the construction of new roads are considered to be short term and can be mitigated. The analysis did not identify any scientific controversy associated with the impacts from the proposed project. (Section 3, pp 1-64)

- 5) *The degree to which the possible effects on the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.*

The proposed action does not involve processes or procedures that are not standard industry practice. The analysis did not identify any effects on the human environment which are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks. (Section 3, pp 1-64)

- 6) *The degree to which the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration.*

The use of Federal lands for the construction of roads is a common practice and provided for under FLPMA. Applications for roads are evaluated on an individual basis to determine the potential environmental effects associated with the proposed action. Approval of the proposed action would not set a precedent for the use of Federal lands for roads or other types of facilities in the future.

- 7) *Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts.*

The analysis considered potential cumulative impacts of the proposed action with other known community developments (Section 3.13.1.1, pp 3-66) and concluded that implementation would not cause significant cumulative effects on air quality, soils, vegetation, wildlife, fire management, livestock grazing, recreation, visual resources, socio/economic, or cultural resources. (Section 3, pp 70-76)

- 8) *The degree to which the action may adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the NRHP or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources.*

Based on the analysis the proposed project would not result in the loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural or historical resources. Six cultural sites in the project area were evaluated and none of them were determined to be eligible for listing on the NRHP. Some impact is expected on a segment of the Bayse Freight Road but due to other impacts that have resulted in a loss of integrity of the resource the segment affected by the proposed action is no longer considered a historic property and is not eligible to be listed on the NRHP. (Section 3, pp 63-64)

- 9) *The degree to which the action may adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act of 1973.*

The proposed action would be authorized within habitat that contains known elements of occurrence of *Lepidium Papilliferum* (Slickspot peppergrass). Consultation with the USF&WS was conducted and an opinion was issued that the proposed action is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the plant. The BLM participates in a Candidate Conservation Agreement which provides management controls for projects that are proposed within occupied habitat. (Section 4.2.3, pp 3)

- 10) *Whether the action threatens a violation of Federal, State, and local laws or requirements imposed for protection of the environment.*

The proposed action was developed in accordance with applicable Federal, State, and local laws for the protection of the environment. The EA disclosed the potential effects of the proposed action on all critical and non-critical elements of the human environment and it was determined that the proposed action would not violate any laws or requirements.

/s/ Tate Fischer

10-21-2014

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Date